An evening with poet
David Dominguez

The Friends’ 2011-12 program events were themed to correspond with the Madden Library’s exceptional and diverse collections. Our final program was held on May 4 and highlighted the poetry collection, specifically the poets of the Central Valley. Several volumes were showcased in an exhibit, a striking presentation of authors that included numerous award winners and our Poet Laureate of the U.S. The Valley has long been fertile ground for writers and poets. We are fortunate to live here, where the crafting of words can be as satisfying as the crops grown.

It was a pleasure that evening to welcome poet David Dominguez, who earned a B.A. in comparative literature from UC Irvine and an M.F.A. in creative writing from the University of Arizona. Dominguez began by reflecting on the events that led him to become a poet, including his time at Fresno State. He acknowledged a love of words, and the importance of family and of being mentored by poets Gary Soto, Corrine Clegg Hales, and Philip Levine. He shared advice with students in the audience, encouraging them to take jobs of hard labor, saying “It will help you distill what is most important.” After reading some selected works, he took questions from the audience. A passion for his art is clear and he reminds us of the generativity of images, the power of personal reflection, and the importance of story.

Dominguez is the author of Marcol Sausage, Work Done Right, and The Ghost of César Chávez. A resident of the Central Valley, he writes poetry that reflects life in the area, often focusing on work and family history. His poems have been published in many anthologies, including The Wind Shifts: New Latino Poetry; Bear Flag Republic: Prose Poems and Poetics from California; and Breathe: 101 Contemporary Odes. He teaches at Reedley College and is the co-founder and editor of The Packinghouse Review.

The evening concluded with a raffle for Dominguez’s books of poetry and a warm reminder of the power of well-chosen words.

Annual Dinner: a “foodie’s” delight

The annual dinner of the Friends of the Madden Library was a feast—for the palate and the mind.

Library Dean Peter McDonald reported that 1.25 million patrons walked through the Library’s doors last year. He acknowledged our generous sponsors for the evening: Patrons Lena Altebarmakian, Terrance Smith, and Stacy Batrich-Smith; and Sponsors Cherrill Gragg, Thomas Ebert, Hal Tokmakian, Frank Laury, Bob Mallek, Colleen Mitchell, and himself.

Dave Tyckoson, Associate Dean of the Library, announced the winner of this year’s Dienstein Scholarship, Alaina Wood, who was the unanimous choice for the award. Wood accepted the award and noted it would allow her to spend more time actually reading the books she loves.

Culino student Alessia Nardocci, who was a finalist in the National Raisin Bread Competition, described her bread-making strategies and the value of Fresno State’s culinology program. The wonderful dessert we enjoyed later was created from her recipe.

A brief meeting included the election of Robert Sullivan to the Board of Directors and the renewal of Deb Everson-Borofka’s term. Each will serve a three-year term.

A delicious dinner was enhanced by award-winning Fresno State wine.

Leading off for the year’s program theme of “Technology and Culture: Progress or Peril?,” speakers Tom Willey of T & D Willey Farms and Jamie Johansson of Lodestar Farms in Oroville spoke on “Technology and Food: 21st Century Food Production—for the neighborhood and 7 billion other people.” The use of organic and non-organic technology was addressed.

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Dinner

Willey gave us a comprehensive history of food procurement—from hunter-gatherers to modern agriculture with a focus on the benefits of natural, organic farming. His visual images were stunning and educational; his words wise and inspiring.

Johansson provided the perspective of a farmer who grows olives and sells olive oil. Johansson is also vice president of the California Farm Bureau Federation. He explored the many challenges of meeting the world’s need for sufficient nutritious food and highlighted the success of farmers in the San Joaquin Valley in meeting these challenges.

Afterward, spirited questions addressed food security, the independent nature of farmers, preserving the most productive agricultural land on the face of the earth in the face of encroaching urban development, conflicting demands for more water for agriculture, and urban uses and the impact of climate change on agriculture.

Meanwhile, lively competitions at the silent auction tables netted the winners wonderful prizes and gave a boost to the Friends’ operating budget.

New endowments in the Special Collections Research Center

Leon S. Peters Legacy Endowment
This endowment was established through the efforts of Kenneth Peters, Dr. Bud Richter, Dr. Peter G. Mehas, and the Honorable Robert Oliver, and was funded by many individual donors. Its purpose is to ensure that Leon Peters’ legacy of high ethical standards, civic engagement, and philanthropic spirit is perpetuated. The endowment funds the preservation, promotion, and access of Peters’ papers, as well as interviews with each recipient of a Leon S. Peters Award.

Gary and Tina Bruno Endowment
The Bruno Endowment supports additions to the many collections of the Special Collections Research Center. It is funded by Gary and Tina Bruno of Clovis and Santa Barbara. Tina, a Library Leadership Board member, and her husband, Gary, created the endowment in 2011.

Donald G. Larson World’s Fair Collection Endowment
The Larson Endowment is our newest one. Still in the active funding stage, it will support new acquisitions (in all formats, for all world’s fairs) to the Donald G. Larson Collection on International Expositions and Fairs. Contributions to the endowment have been made by many of Don Larson’s friends; gifts are welcome from any donor who wants to support the world’s fair collection.
Overview of the state of education given in March

Our March event featured the Library’s Teacher Resource Center and truly inspiring discussions on education in Fresno County led by Fresno County Superintendent of Education, Larry Powell, and Sanger Unified’s award-winning Superintendent, Marcus P. Johnson.

The Teacher Resource Center’s collection, managed by Librarian Mike Tillman and available to the public, includes teaching materials used in pre-Kindergarten through grade 12 classrooms. The Center provides assistance with the identification and location of various innovative teaching materials, which are available for loan. Tillman was available for questions at the open house and visitors could view hands-on instructional materials such as the Hubbard Scientific Teaching Tornado kit and a variety of anatomy and biology models. Several student teachers attended and were pleased to learn about the wide variety of supplemental classroom materials for use.

The evening continued with a discussion led by Superintendent Larry Powell, who will serve in his current position until 2015, overseeing 325 schools, 35 school districts, and 195,000 students. One of his passions is the anti-bullying program, “Rachel’s Challenge,” in which 47 Fresno County schools, to date, have participated. Another is making preschool part of every student’s education. Research shows those who attend preschool have a higher likelihood of graduating and going on to lead productive lives. Powell emphasized the need to keep art in the schools as a way to encourage student innovation, and discussed the importance of staying current with digital technologies that change the ways we communicate, sort, store, and retrieve information.

Superintendent Marcus Johnson, named Outstanding U.S. School Superintendent for 2012, has worked in Valley education for 36 years. Under his leadership, Sanger Unified schools have increased student performance and graduation rates to all-time records for the district. He emphasized that “a child is a message we send to the future.” He credits the recent success of Sanger’s schools to the Professional Learning Community model, in which teachers take part in regular collective learning communities to best plan and assess their student’s needs on a regular basis.

Powell and Johnson received a standing ovation for their inspiring presentations. The evening concluded with a raffle for GW School Supplies gift certificates made available by members of the Board.

The Board of Directors offers special thanks to the following for helping to make the event a memorable one: Librarian Michael Tillman, Marcia Kraft, Lena Alterbermian, Stacy Batrich-Smith, Annette Paxton, and most especially, the Educational Employees Credit Union for sponsoring the event.

Donor appreciation event

The Library’s Special Collections Research Center hosted a donor appreciation event and unveiled its latest exhibit, “Gifts Galore! Celebrating 60 Years of Collecting in Special Collections.” About 30 people attended, most of them the donors of collections or their heirs and family members. Each donor or their representative spoke for a few minutes about the significance of their collection or why they decided to donate it. Some, like Dave Schutt, told what his father’s Tulare history collection meant to him and others in the community and how glad he was that it was being preserved and valued. Others, like Glenn Jones, explained how he got started collecting and regaled the crowd with stories of his world’s fair experiences.

Special Collections was established in 1950 with the donation to the Library of the Roy J. Woodward Memorial Library of Californiana. It has grown tremendously and now specializes in several key research areas, namely world’s fairs (the renowned Donald G. Larson Collection on International Expositions and Fairs); enology and viticulture; local history (part of the Woodward collection); antiquarian, rare, and fine press books (A. Wayne Colver collection); university history (University Archives); and regional, state and federal politics (Central Valley Political Archive). Huge parts of these collections have come from generous donors, past and present. We wanted to acknowledge and remind them that the Library values every collection and remembers every donor, whether the donation was last week or 50 years ago.

—Tammy Lau, Head, Special Collections
2012/13 Friends Programs

2012  Friday, November 9, 6 p.m.
“Technology and Food: From Kitchen to Table.” What’s new in food preparation? Speakers: Nykole and Terry Hibbs of Dinner My Way and Alexa Popplewell of Whole Foods.

2013  Friday, January 25, 6 p.m.
“Technology and Communication: From Quill to Quantum.” How have social media affected daily communication patterns? Edgar Blunt of Denham Resources and Calli Erickson of Not Just Paper.

Friday, March 15, 6 p.m.
“Technology and Human Mobility: From Disabled to Enabled.” How has technology changed the lives of the physically impaired? Sunrise Medical and Resources for Independence of Central California.

Friday, May 3, 6 p.m.
“Technology and Human Expression: The Arts in the Digital Age.” Have the visual arts benefited from or fallen victim to technological changes? Janice Ledgerwood, Graphic Artist/Art Instructor, and Terry Hayden, Spectrum Gallery curator.

For more information or to RSVP, call Sharon at 559.278.5790.